

U.S. Department of Justice

***United States Attorney
Eastern District of Virginia***

*Paul J. McNulty
United States Attorney*

*World Trade Center 757/441-6331
Suite 8000, 101 West Main Street
Norfolk, VA 23510*

NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2004
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA**

**For Further Information Contact:
Deanna Warren 757-441-6331**

Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Thuong Mong Nguyen, age 32, a resident of Westminster, California, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Jerome B. Friedman to a prison term of 150 months and ordered to pay \$1.3 million in restitution to the Bank of America.

Nguyen was responsible for the operation of a nationwide identity theft and bank fraud ring which utilized the services of a Bank of America employee to obtain personal customer information including names, dates of birth, social security numbers, addresses, and account balances. Nguyen would then recruit individuals to impersonate the customer by using fraudulent identification documents, checks and counter withdrawal slips. The money would then be withdrawn from the customers' accounts, converted into cashiers checks and subsequently cashed. The group operated in Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Kansas, Washington, and California. As a result of the conspiracy, the Bank of America sustained losses in excess of \$1 million.

The investigation was conducted by the United States Secret Service with assistance from Bank of America investigators and the Norfolk, Virginia, and Westminster, California Police Departments. Assistant United States Attorneys Robert J. Seidel, Jr. and Stephen Campbell prosecuted the case.

###